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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

Wednesday, July 5, 1944.

Subject: HELP KEEP GARDEN GOING: Information from garden specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

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No garden is too small to help the food situation. Last year if thousands of gardeners hadn't pitched in and raised vegetables rationing would have been much stricter than it has been.

The same thing applies now. With the invasion started and liberation in sight for millions of enslaved people in Europe the need for food is even greater than ever, as our fighting men must be fed and our allies, as well.

So women and girls of all ages have been swinging spades, hoes, and other garden implements and taking as much pride in seeing succulent rows of chard growing in their gardens as they did with their flower beds.

There's something attractive and satisfying about hoeing your own rows of snap beans.

Those of you who are "invited out" for dinner these war-time days don't need to mumble something about: "Shall I bring my ration books?" - or think you have to bring the hostess a present to repay the kindness - not if you are growing some fine, crisp, right-out-of-the-garden radishes or if you bring along a big bunch of bright yellow carrots, fresh out of that Victory Garden.

No ma'am! You may get many an extra "invite" if you can bring along fresh vegetables under your arm.

Last year thousands of stenographers, clerks, teachers, and others helped work on farms as part of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's War Food Administration farm labor program. And last fall many farmers from coast-to-coast admitted they never had, any better "hired hands" in all their lives. Women's help in this field

is as needed and successful as in other things they tackle.

So it's not surprising that many women are taking to gardening and finding it a grand hobby, too. With sweethearts in the service, husbands overseas and other relatives taking active part in this war, it is very fitting that women are trying their hand at Victory Gardening. One girl has become an ardent garden fan because she saw a fine assortment of beans, carrots, beets, tomatoes, and chard about to "go to seed" when the neighbor who planted them in the nearby Victory Garden plot was suddenly transferred to a job in another city. She had been wishing she had planted a garden herself, but somehow didn't get around to it, so when they told her they would be glad to have her take this garden over, she found she not only had all the beans, carrots, beets, tomatoes, and chard she and friends could use, but other gardeners advised her to study up on canning so as not to let anything go to waste. It was not only easier than she thought, but she got a lot of real satisfaction out of doing it. "I had a real thrill," she explained, "in knowing, too, that the food I helped to produce meant just that much more was released for fellows like two brothers overseas!"

So why not look around, right where you are? There may be a stray Victory Garden in your neighborhood which may also need some help. You may not be so fortunate as to find one all tailor-made to take over, but often a gardener tackles more than he or she can handle when they start out, and will welcome some help.

There are some things you can still plant in July, too. Tomato plants, for example. Get some that are well developed and of later variety and set them out right now. They should produce fine, luscious fruit within 60 to 70 days. If the frost does threaten to get the later ones, pull up the plants by the roots and let the tomatoes ripen indoors on the vines. Melons, squash, and cucumbers can still be planted and so can radishes.

With some 20,000,000 Victory Gardeners busy again, this year, raising food you can surely find someone in your neighborhood who will give you real help when you



start. Be sure to look things up or if you live in a town or city where there is a county agent of the Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, he will be glad to give you more information, and help.

In this way girls of our country are taking active part in the war effort - right in their own backyards.

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